

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An optical encoder has a light irradiating device; an optical scale having a grating for transmitting or reflecting incident light; light-  
5 receiving elements disposed in a plurality of different directions; and an optical system for amplitude-modulating light traveling from the light irradiating device to the optical scale and transmitted or reflected by the grating, by a dividing element in  
10 which a plurality of V-shaped grooves are juxtaposed, and for dividing the amplitude-modulated light into beams along a plurality of different directions to guide the beams to the respective light-receiving elements. The dividing element is comprised of  
15 repetitions of such structure that a plurality of V-grooves consisting of planes of mutually different angles are juxtaposed at a predetermined pitch.